67 extend through the first unit 30 and the second unit 33, respectively, or are coupled to exterior surfaces thereof.

Any reference in this specification to "one embodiment," "an embodiment," "example embodiment," etc., means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment of the invention. The appearances of such phrases in various places in the specification are not necessarily all referring to the same embodiment. Further, when a particular feature, structure, or characteristic is described in connection with any embodiment, it is submitted that it is within the purview of one skilled in the art to effect such feature, structure, or characteristic in connection with other ones of the embodiments. Furthermore, for ease of understanding, certain method procedures may have been delineated as separate procedures; however, these separately delineated procedures should not be construed as necessarily order dependent in their performance. That is, some procedures may be able to be performed in an alternative ordering, simultaneously, etc.

As described above, embodiments of a portable computer and methods of using same have various advantages. In embodiments of a dual display type portable computer according to the present invention, both the first unit and the second unit have display modules so that a user can selectively use the display modules. Accordingly, a user can see a movie on a large screen, can more conveniently perform work such as CAD or Spread Sheet with large transportable display surfaces. Further, a user can input a desired language without connecting a separate keyboard in an easy and simple manner. Also, in embodiments of a portable computer and methods thereof, the first unit and the second unit having display modules can be selectably unfolded from each other with various angles, and the display modules of the first and second units can be placed in the same plane.

The foregoing embodiments and advantages are merely exemplary and are not to be construed as limiting the present invention. The present teaching can be readily applied to other types of apparatuses. The description of the present invention is intended to be illustrative, and not to limit the scope of the claims. Many alternatives, modifications, and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art. In the claims, means-plus-function clauses are intended to cover the structures described herein as performing the recited function and not only structural equivalents but also equivalent structures.

What is claimed is:

1. A hinge unit of a portable electronic device, the hinge unit comprising:

a fixed hinge plate fixed to a first unit having a first display module, the fixed hinge plate having a first hinge cylinder;

a hinge link having a first hinge shaft rotatably inserted in the first hinge cylinder, the hinge link connecting the first unit with a second unit having a second display module;

a movable hinge bracket assembled with the second unit and configured to be rotated about a second hinge shaft, the movable hinge bracket having a guide section for guiding the hinge link that is movably inserted through the movable hinge bracket; and

a stopper disposed at a corresponding portion between the hinge link and the guide section of the movable hinge bracket to control the hinge link movement with respect to the movable hinge bracket, wherein the hinge link extends through hinge slots formed through rear ends of the first and second units to couple the first and second units with each other.

2. The hinge unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first unit is one of a main body and a display body, and the second unit is the other of the main body and the display body.

3. The hinge unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hinge link has an engagement protuberance formed at a distal end of the hinge link, and the movable hinge bracket has an engagement protuberance channel, in which the engagement protuberance is located and guided, and wherein the engagement protuberance prevents the hinge link from being separated from the movable hinge bracket when the engagement protuberance is engaged with a lower end of the engagement protuberance channel.

4. The hinge unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hinge unit is positioned along a lateral area between the second display module and an outer lateral edge of the second unit.

5. The hinge unit of claim 4, wherein the hinge unit is coupled to tear ends of corresponding sides of the first unit and the second unit to enable the first display module and the second display module to overlap each other or to be unfolded until they are placed in an equal plane.

6. A portable computer, comprising:

a first unit having a first display module;

a second unit being capable of being folded on and unfolded from the first unit; and

a hinge mechanism configured to support reciprocal folding movements of the first and second units, wherein the hinge mechanism is positioned along a lateral area between the first display module and an outer lateral edge of the first unit, wherein the hinge mechanism comprises,

a fixed hinge plate fixed to the first unit, the fixed hinge plate having a first hinge cylinder through which a hinge hole is formed,

a hinge link having a first hinge shaft rotatably inserted in the hinge hole, the hinge link assembled with the first unit and the second unit to connect the first unit and the second unit with each other,

a movable hinge bracket assembled with the second unit in such a manner that the movable hinge bracket can be rotated about a second hinge shaft, the movable hinge bracket having a guide section for guiding the hinge link that is movably inserted through the movable hinge bracket, and

a stopper configured to resistively prevent the hinge link from relatively moving with respect to the movable hinge bracket, wherein the hinge link extends through hinge slots formed through rear ends of the first and second units to connect the first and second units with each other.

7. The portable computer of claim 6, wherein the second unit has a second display module and the hinge mechanism is positioned along a lateral area between the second display module and an outer lateral edge of the second unit.

8. The portable computer of claim 7, wherein the first and second units have top surfaces respectively containing the display modules, and wherein when the second unit moves from the folded to an unfolded position, the hinge mechanism extends though corresponding removed portions of facing adjacent sides of the rear ends of the first and second units.

9. The portable computer of claim 8, wherein a rear edge of the top surface of the first unit adjacent the first display module and a lower edge of the top surface of the second unit adjacent the second display module has a reduced width relative to side edges adjacent the display modules.